

THE NEW YORK ACADEMY OF MEDICINE—ITS OBJECTS, FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND FINANCIAL NEEDS

FOREWORD

Early in May, the President called together a group of Fellows of the Academy at an informal dinner at which were discussed the needs of the Academy and in particular the library. After a presentation of the facts which are given in the following article it was suggested to the President that a special meeting of the Council be called to discuss in general the needs of the Academy. At this special meeting of the Council held on May 7, the President was authorized to appoint a special committee on increased endowment.

It was agreed that there should be no drive, but that when opportunity offered the members of this special committee should present the needs of the Academy to such individuals as they might deem proper with the hope of securing donations.

The following suggestions were made to the Committee: that the Committee endeavor to interest the Fellows of the Academy in making a personal bequest to the Academy and also to suggest to others the possibility of mentioning the Academy in their wills and that this might also be suggested to lawyers who were frequently called upon to name institutions to which a legacy might properly be given.

The Committee was also asked to consider the possibility of Fellows of the Academy insuring their lives for restricted sums in favor of the Academy.

At the meetings of nearly all the Sections during the winter, the attention of the Fellows has been called to the fact that the dues of the Fellows would have to be increased in order to meet the increased expenses in the new building. If the proposed new activities are to be satisfactorily carried out and the library properly maintained and developed, a million dollars new endowment will only be sufficient to meet the initial needs.

The Council hopes that the Fellows of the Academy will bear these conditions in mind and lend their support to the Academy's activities and aid in such manner as may seem to them advisable and proper.

The New York Academy of Medicine is a membership corporation founded in 1843 and incorporated by the Legislature in 1847. It consists of 1625 physicians who are resident Fellows, 92 non-resident Fellows and 20 scientists who are Associate Fellows, a total membership of 1737.

### *Object*

The Academy is organized for the promotion of the science and art of medicine, the maintenance of a public medical library, the promotion of the public health, and of medical education.

These activities are under the direction of a Council consisting of the elected officers, the chairman of the standing committees and ten elected Trustees.

### *The Promotion of the Science and Art of Medicine*

The Fellows are grouped into thirteen different sections, each one of which represents some special branch of medicine or surgery. These sections hold monthly scientific meetings and there are one hundred and four held annually. In addition, there are sixteen meetings of the Academy. All of these meetings are professional in character at which papers are read on medical subjects, patients are presented and discussed, instruments are shown, specimens removed at operation and autopsy are exhibited and physicians who are not Fellows, from the city and elsewhere, are invited to lecture on new discoveries in medicine. Physicians and dentists who are not Fellows, and medical students frequently attend these meetings and are always welcome.

In addition to the regular meetings of the members of the Academy, 38 medical societies hold their regular meetings in the building. These meetings are also educational in character and are attended by the members of these societies.

### *The Library*

The library of the Academy is the second largest medical library in the United States. It contains 140,000 bound volumes, 104,500 pamphlets, 1,970 medical classics and rare medical books and 43 incunabula or books printed prior to 1500. It also possesses a considerable number of portraits and engravings of medical men, hospitals and medical activities. The card catalogue is readily accessible and is simply arranged for the convenience of

the readers. In the main reading room are found the index catalogues and reference books and bound volumes of journals of the past eight or ten years.

The library staff aid the Fellows and the public in answering inquiries, assisting them in securing needed information and furnishing books to the readers in a very short space of time.

The library is used by 30,000 readers a year, among whom are not only physicians but also public health officials, medical students, representatives of publishing houses and also newspaper men and dramatic writers seeking technical information. (For further information see reprint from the June 1926 Bulletin entitled "Needs of the Library," by Archibald Malloch, M.D., Librarian.)

#### *The Promotion of the Public Health*

The Public Health Committee was organized in 1911. It studies various phases of community health, quarantine, communicable diseases, hospitals, dispensaries, day nurseries, convalescent homes, and various other community health activities. The committee advises various city departments and private agencies and makes studies for them which frequently result in improvements of method or operation. The efforts of the members of the committee were largely instrumental in bringing about the transfer of quarantine from New York State to the Federal Government and its advice has been accepted resulting in the abolition of dispensaries, the consolidation of hospitals, and the development of a proper program for the care of different types of disease.

#### *The Promotion of Medical Education*

The Committee on Medical Education was organized in 1924. It has made a survey of courses and other opportunities for graduate medical study in New York with a view to improving the value of existing opportunities and encouraging the development of additional ones. A series of synopses describing approved courses and internships has been published by subjects and has been widely distributed. The committee maintains a bureau of clinical information which provides a central meeting place or headquarters where visiting medical men may obtain information regarding all medical activities in the city. It has

collected and classified detailed information regarding opportunities for graduate medical study in other cities of the United States, Canada and Europe and is prepared to advise physicians who desire information regarding such opportunities offered in any medical center. The bureau publishes a daily bulletin of surgical operations and a weekly bulletin of medical clinics given in the important hospitals of the city.

#### ADMISSION TO FELLOWSHIP

A physician is admitted as a Fellow on account of his professional attainments. He must show evidence of a skill in practice or if not a practitioner, he must hold some responsible position in a hospital, laboratory, or medical school. Further, he must have lived up to the ethical standards of the profession. The Academy is in no sense a club and there are no social activities. The only possible semblance of a social activity is the furnishing of light suppers after stated meetings of the Academy which are provided by the income of an endowment bequeathed for this special purpose by Dr. Alfred L. Loomis.

#### NEW PROGRAM AND BUILDING

The present quarters of the Academy became entirely too small for its activities as far back as 1910 when a proposal to enlarge the present building at 43rd Street or to secure a new building was first broached. After repeated discussion and postponement due to war, increased prices, and other reasons, a definite plan was agreed upon in 1922 which culminated in a gift of \$1,550,000, from the Carnegie Corporation for a new building and a pledge of \$1,250,000 for the endowment of new educational activities from the Rockefeller Foundation.

#### *The Rockefeller Endowment*

The Rockefeller Endowment will provide approximately \$62,500 a year and its use is limited for the salaries of a director, a librarian, and educational activities and is to be employed for the purpose of making studies and surveys of community health problems, for the promotion of post graduate medical education, for the maintenance of a bureau of clinical information and the enlargement of library activities. Those restrictions apply until 1933 but there are none thereafter. This fund cannot be used

for the maintenance of the building nor for the purchase or binding of books, journals and pamphlets, but is strictly limited to new educational activities, most of which have already been undertaken.

### *New Building*

The new building situated at the south east corner of 103rd Street and Fifth Avenue on a lot 100 x 175 feet is rapidly approaching completion. The building will contain a large auditorium and five large meeting rooms. There are commodious reading rooms for the library and a stack which will hold 250,000 volumes and which is capable of being enlarged. It also will provide for the Academy's administrative offices and committees and also the offices of the Medical Society of the State of New York, the Medical Society of the County of New York, the First District Dental Society, the Society for the Relief of Widows and Orphans and the New York Physicians Mutual Aid Association and nearly all of the thirty-eight special medical societies and others will hold their meetings in it.

## NEW ACTIVITIES

### *Committee on Medical Education*

The continued promotion of postgraduate medical education will demand an additional staff to make the necessary studies under contemplation. Studies should be made of sickness and its causes, the results obtained in various hospitals, the different methods employed in these hospitals and a comparison of the results, the creation of new teaching courses in special hospitals not now utilized for this purpose, cooperation with various medical schools in the development of postgraduate teaching and other opportunities which are being considered for improving the possibilities of medical practice.

### *Lectures*

Under the auspices of the Committee on Medical Education it is proposed to give a series of lectures annually on clinical subjects for the members of the medical profession and also to provide popular lectures for the community on medical subjects. It

is also proposed to keep the public informed on questions relating to disease and its cure.

### *The Committee on Public Health Relations*

This committee will continue its studies and will, it is hoped, take a more active part in cooperating with the various city departments that have to do with the prevention of sickness, care of patients, the safe-guarding of the city's food and water supplies and the disposal of the city's wastes. To carry out these plans, the Public Health Relations Committee will need additional funds.

### *Library*

The Academy has agreed that the library should be further developed. The new building will permit the reading rooms to be open to the public until five in the afternoon. Additional periodicals in Spanish and Italian should be obtained as well as chemical journals. A book delivery service should be developed. Bibliographers should be employed to aid in the preparation of scientific articles. A photostat should be installed for making photostats of rare pamphlets, books or illustrations. Exhibitions of medical works, medals, instruments, etc., should be given from time to time. Brooklyn has its own medical library but serious consideration should be given to providing reading rooms for physicians in the Boroughs of Bronx and Queens. The collection of incunabula and medical classics should be enlarged.

A medical library differs from a general library only in that its work is limited to a special field. The library will need an increased endowment for the purchase of books, pamphlets, periodicals, classical books, incunabula, portraits, engravings of medical celebrities, etc. The Academy has received twenty special bequests for the library. Nineteen of these are restricted to the purchase of books. The income of one only may be used for the maintenance of the library. These sums, however, are small and the total income amounts to \$15,000.

### FINANCES OF THE ACADEMY

The Academy owns the new site and will own the new building free and clear of mortgage. The present annual expenses of the Academy are \$171,000. Its present income is as follows:

From permanent endowment .. . . .	\$45,000
From Rockefeller Foundation . . . .	53,000
From assessment for the use of rooms ..	12,000
From dues of Fellows .. . . .	33,000
From Witthaus estate . . . . .	6,000
From miscellaneous income . . . . .	13,750
Total	\$162,750

For 1926 only, there is an available balance of \$8,250 for special purposes.

The annual expenses of the Academy in the new building will be \$225,000. The income of the Academy will be increased by the proceeds of the sale of the present premises after the payment of a mortgage and the equipment of the new building, by \$22,250, which will bring the total income up to \$185,000. The proper maintenance of the Academy and its activities requires an increased income of at least \$40,000 annually.

#### SPECIFIC NEEDS

The Academy needs an additional endowment

For the Committee on Medical Education of .....	\$100,000
For the Committee on Public Health Relations of ....	250,000
For the adequate maintenance of the library of .....	600,000
For lectureships of . . . . .	50,000
	\$1,000,000

#### INCREASED ENDOWMENT NEEDED

Many of the Fellows will recall that the two underlying reasons for abandoning the 60th Street site were the high cost of the land and the very large increased cost of maintenance when the new building would be finished. The sale of the 60th Street property and the final decision to build at 103rd Street has increased the Academy's endowment by about \$700,000.

In Bulletin Volume II, No. 2, published in February, 1926, there was a statement signed by the Treasurer showing the status of the Academy's finances and the need for increased funds.

At a meeting of the Council held in May the President was authorized to appoint an Endowment Committee for the purpose of securing additional funds for the Academy. The following Committee was therefore appointed: Dr. Brown, Chairman, Drs.